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WEEKLY VISITANT.

"OURS ARE THE PLANS OF FAIR DELIHGTFUL PEACE,
"UNWARP'D BY PARTY RAGE, TO LIVE LIKE BROTHERS."

SALEM—SATURDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 1, 1806.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

FOR THE WEEKLY VISITANT.

ON THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF *SCIENCE AND LITERATURE.*

When they attempted to enlist science, and the powers of the imagination under the same banners, Darwin and Akenside seemed to rank all scientific men, with themselves, as uniting the powers of fancy with a knowledge of the sciences. But the obstacles to such a union are too great ever to permit it to be general. As it is a requisite in philosophy, that nothing be received without evidence, the fancy is unemployed in its speculations, and of course becomes almost lost by disuse.

Science and Literature are generally companions in the progress of society toward perfection. But the professors of each are often enemies. A poet will sometimes look with contempt on a mathematician, as one who has no soul; and a mathematician, having read the Eneid, and being asked his opinion of the work, replied, that it proved nothing. As therefore, they are seldom united, and the professors of each seem sometimes mutually to despise each other, it may be a question, curious enough to employ the attention of an unoccupied mind, whether, considered distinctly, Literature or Science has the most salutary operation on Society.

The effects of the belles-lettres on the mind and manners, are to purify the one and refine the other. Like associating with those whose morals are good and whose education has been polished, we acquire by an acquaintance with polite literature, the purity of the one, and the elegance and softness of the other. Poetry exalts the feelings, and from the examples of characters portrayed by poets, the minds of the youthful are raised, and filled with magnanimous sentiments. Morality is also a favorite of the belles-lettres, and flourishes under their guidance. The effect of the Spectator, which diffused a knowledge of them more than any other work, from the manner in which it was published, is attested by too many authors to leave room for doubt on the subject. The morals and the manners were both refined and purified by it.

Besides these advantages, Polite Literature originates a better taste, and of course, a capacity for the enjoyment of more delicate and innocent pleasures, than we have by nature. And as mankind must be amused, those pleasures

are to be preferred which are most innocent, as it respects others, and which operate in the most salutary manner on ourselves. Intellectual pleasures have obtained a decided preference from the wise, as a man by means of them becomes more independent of others, and has always resources of pleasure in his own breast. They interfere with none of the pursuits of others.

Though, however, the belles-lettres have these advantages, Science is more immediately and permanently useful, as applied to the purposes of life. The principles of Geometry, applied to the arts, furnish us with our habitations. By Geometry and Astronomy we are made able to explore the utmost bounds of the ocean; and the study of the latter science, while it enlarges the mind, gives us the most convincing proofs of the existence of a Deity, and fills us with sublime ideas of his power and goodness. By the Sciences we are able to unravel many of the mysteries of nature. Anatomy learns us to restore the human frame, disarranged by external violence. Chemistry and Botany not only enable us to stop the progress of decay in the corporeal functions, when suffering under internal disease, but the former supplies the necessary knowledge to penetrate the depths of the earth, and to render the minerals subservient to the use of man.

The study of the Mathematics, has been subject to the sneers of ignorant and weak minds. Unable to comprehend the truths of the science, it appears dry and useless to them. The highest species of excellence, is always so entirely out of the comprehension of such characters, that wherever it is found, they always ridicule it, because they cannot perceive its beauties.

It must be confessed, however, that this study has sometimes the effect of rendering man unsocial. But this is much more than compensated by the services it renders mankind. The truths of the science are spread over the whole globe, which shares the benefits resulting from them. As it respects those who are engaged in this study, their minds are abstracted from external objects, and shut up in themselves, they are careless or ignorant of the frowns or smiles of fortune. The body in which the mind is enclosed occupies but a small part of its attention, and threatening evils are neither heeded or dreaded. No study so much strengthens the powers of reason or preserves them so long in their pristine vigor. So far from wasting by constant application, they are more able, after overcoming one difficulty, to encounter another.

From this short and very imperfect comparison of the advantages resulting from Science and Literatnre, a preference must be given to the former, as uniting more important qualities. They may be compared to the virtues, the softer are more pleasing, but the sterner virtues of more real advantage to mankind.

BARCA.

FOR THE WEEKLY VISITANT.

We, the Subscribers, believe Miss Lætitia Modish to be a downright prude, who, under the appearance of censuring the writer of "Seasonable hints to the Ladies," is throwing her witticisms on her own sex. We, therefore advise Miss Lætitia Modish to wear pantaloons; and the writer of "seasonable hints," to keep his bed during the winter.

OLIVIA CAUSTIC.
MARIANN ASELGOS.
BELINDA HARDY.

MISCELLANY.

A PORTRAIT OF M. D'ALEMBERT.

BY HIMSELF :—ADDRESSED IN, 1760, TO MME.***.

M. D'ALEMBERT has nothing remarkable in his figure, either good or bad. He cannot form a judgment of his own physiognomy ; but it is said to be commonly ironical and malicious. It is, indeed, strikingly marked with ridicule, for which, perhaps, he is not without some talent, and it would not be surprising, if corresponding impressions should sometimes be apparent in his countenance.

His conversation is very unequal, sometimes serious, sometimes gay, according to the state of his mind ; very frequently ill connected *(decousue)* but never tiresome or pedantic. No one who sees him can doubt that he has devoted the greater part of his life to profound study. The dose of wit which makes an ingredient in his conversation, is neither so strong nor so abundant as to give uneasiness, or to outrage the self-love of any person ; and, fortunately for him, he has no more wit than he shews; for he would not fail to shew what he had, from no other impulse than his absolute inability to repress his inclination in that particular. Every one therefore is at ease in his company, without any attempt on his part to interrupt ; and it is apparent that he makes no such attempts, which procures him every where a kind reception. His gaiety, sometimes even to peurility, and the contrast of this boyish mirth with the scientific reputation, whether well or ill founded, which he has acquired, is another reason why he generally pleases, though he seldom makes this his object. He only wishes to amuse and divert those whom he regards.

M. D'Alembert rarely enters into argument, and never with acrimony : not that he is not sometimes disposed to maintain his own opinion ; but he feels so little anxious to prevail over others, that he is not much concerned about bringing them over to his way of thinking. Besides, very few subjects without the pale of the accurate sciences appear to him to admit such evidence as to preclude freedom of opinion ; and his favorite maxim is, That a man may say what he pleases almost upon every subject.

Perspicuity and justness form the leading characters of his mind. In the study of the higher geometry, he has acquired some abilitty and great facility, which procured him great reputation, in investigations of that kind. This facility has allowed him some leisure to cultivate literature with some success. His style is concise, clear and precise, commonly easy, without pretension, though chaste, sometimes a little dry, but never uncouth, more energetic than ardent, more just than poetical, and more dignified than insinuating.

Having been devoted to retirement and labour till he had passed his twenty fifth year, he entered very late into the world, and never was able to give it much pleasure. He could never bring himself to learning its usages and its language, and pehaps he is not free from a sort of little vanity which makes him depisse them. He is not,however, on any occasion unpolite; because he is neither rude nor morose ; but he is sometimes uncivil, from inattention or ignorance. Compliments embarrass him, because he has not always ready the formulary by which they are to be answered. His conversation possesses neither gallantry nor grace ; and he says obliging things, only because he thinks them, and because those to whom he addresses them are agreeable to him. Thus the leading featnres of his character are frankness and truth, often somewhat clownish, but never offensive.

Impatient and choleric in a voilent degree, contradiction and insult make on M. D'Alembert an impression so lively, that he is not always master of it ; but it dissipates while he is expressing his feelings of it. At bottom he is very gentle, easily pleased, more complaisant than he appears, and governed with great facility provided he does not preceive that he is governed ; for his love of independence rises to such a pitch of enthusiasm that he has often refused things which would have been agreeable to him, if he had not foreseen that they would have brought him under some constraint—a dis-

position which drew from one of his friends the well founded remark, That M. D'Alembert was the slave of his liberty.

Some people call him wicked, for no other reason than because he does not scruple to laugh at the foolish pretences which disgust him. But, if that be a wickedness, it is the only one of which he is capable. He has neither spleen nor patience to go farther; and it would make him miserable to think that any one, even of those who have taken the most pains to injure him, should be made unhappy by his means. Not that he forgets injurious attempts and actions; but he knows no other method of revenge than a constant refusal of his friendship and confidence to those of whom he has reason to complain.

His own experience, and the example of others, have taught M. D'Alembert that he ought to distrust mankind in general; but his extreme openness does not permit him to exercise this distrust with any one in particular. He cannot bring himself to believe that he is deceived; and this defect, (for it certainly is such, though originating in a good principle) produces in him one still greater, namely, that of being too easily susceptible of the impressions intended to be made on him.

Without a family, and without connections of any kind, early abandoned to his fate, habituated from his infancy to an obscure and confined, but free manner of life; happily born with some talents and few passions, M. D'Alembert has found in study and in his natural gaiety, a remedy against the state of desertion in which he was placed. He has preserved a sort of existence in the world, without too much anxiety about it, and without the assistance of any person. As he owes nothing, except to nature and to himself, he is ignorant of low cunning and management, arts so necessary to men who make their court to the great in order to arrive at wealth; nay so great is his contempt of names and titles, that he had the imprudence to prefix that sentiment to one of his works. This made him so many enemies among the haughty and powerfull class of men, that they wished him to be thought the most vain being upon earth; but he is only high spirited and independent, and more apt to appreciate himself below than above his real value.

Although his vanity is by no means so excessive as many people think, he is not insensible to its influence; he is even sensible to the first impression, both of praise and reproach; but in a moment reflection restores the balance of his mind, and makes him regard panegyric with indifference, and satire with contempt.

His maxim is, That a literary man who wishes to raise his reputation on a durable basis, should attend very much to what he writes, sufficiently to what he does, and moderately to what he says. M. D'Alembert regulates his conduct by this principle; he says many foolish things, writes but few, and does none.

No man carries disinterestedness to a greater length. But as he has no wants or caprices to gratify, those virtues cost him so little, that he deserves no praise for them; for they are rather a diminution of vice than an increase of goodness.

As there are but few persons whom he truly regards, and as to those few he makes no parade of affection; those who do not thoroughly know him, suppose him to be incapable of friendship. No man, however, takes a more lively interest in the happiness or the misfortunes of his friends. Their interests deprive him of sleep, and on their account he thinks no sacrifice too great.

His soul, naturally sensible, loves to entertain agreeable sentiments, and hence it is at once inclined to be gay and melancholy.—To this last impression, indeed, it surrenders itself with a sort of delight; and this natural bias of his mind to a pensive mood very much qualifies him for writing on mournful and pathetic subjects.

With such a disposition, it will not appear surprising, that in his youth M. D'Alembert was susceptible of the most lively, the most tender, and the most delightful of all the passions, but solitude and different pursuits for a long time kept him a stranger to its impressions. The sentiment slept, so to speak, in the bottom of his soul; and its resuscitation was terrible! Love has been his bane and the torment he has suffered from it long made him sick of the world, of life, and even of study itself. After having consumed

the early years of his life in meditation and literary labor, he has seen, like the ancient sage, the vanity of human knowledge, which cannot fill the capacity of the soul, and exclaimed with Amyntas in Tasso, "I have lost the time, which I have passed without love!"—But as he was not easily subdued by love, he was not easily persuaded that he was himself the object of that passion.—Too long a resistance discouraged him, not by offending his self-love, but because the simplicity and candour of his mind would not allow him to believe that a continued resistance could be only apparent. His soul requires to be replenished, not tormented; to be soothed with agreeable emotions, not to be worn out with mortifying agitations!

THE SPECTRE OF THF BROAKEN,

A MOUNTAIN NEAR HANOVER, IN GERMANY.

(Extracted from a Gottengen Journal).

In the month of September, last year, as I was making a tour through the mountains called Harz, with a very agreeable party, and ascended the *Broaken*, I found an excelent account and explanation of a phenomenon, as seen by M. Have, on the 23d of May, 1797, in his diary of an excursion to that mountain. I shall therefore take the liberty of transcribing it.

"After having been here for the thirtieth time," says Mr. Have, "and besides other objects of my attention, having procured information respecting an atmospheric phænomenon, I was at lengt so fortunate as to have the pleasure of seeing it, and perhaps my description may afford satisfaction to others who visit the *Broaken* through curiosity. The sun rose about four o'clock, and the atmosphere being quite serene towards the east, his rays could pass without any obstruction over the Heinnichsohe. In the south-west, however towards Achtermanshohe, a brisk west wind carried before it their transparent vapours, which were not yet condensed into thick heavy clouds.

"About a quarter past four I went towards the inn, and looked round to see whether the atmosphere would permit me to have a free prospect to the south-west, when I observed, at a very great distance, towards Achtermanshohe, *a human figure of a monstrous size!* A violent gust of wind having almost carried away my hat, I clapped my hand to it by moving my arm towards my head, and—*the Colossal figure did the same!* The pleasure which I felt on this discovery can hardly be described; for I had already walked many a weary step, in the hopes of seeing this *shadowy image*, without being able to gratify my curiosity. I immediately made another movement, by bending my body, and the *Colossal figure* before me repeated it! I was desirous of doing the same thing once more, but my *Colossus* had vanished. I remained in the same position, waiting to see whether it would return, and in a few minutes it again made its appearance on the Achtermanshohe. I paid my respects to it a second time, and it *did the same to me!* I then called the lanlord of the *Broaken*, and having both taken the same position which I had taken alone, we looked towards the mountain, but saw nothing. We had not, however, stood long, when *two such Colossal figures* were formed over the above eminence, which repeated our compliments, by *bending their bodies as we did;* after which they vanished! We retained our position; kept our eyes fixed on the same spot, and in a little time the two figures again stood before us, and were joined by a third. Every movement that we made by bending our bodies these figures imitated; but with this difference, that the phenomenon was sometimes weak and faint, sometimes strong and well defined.

"Having thus had an opertunity of discovering the whole secret of this phænomenon, I can give the following information to such of my readers as may be desirous of seeing it themselves :—

"When the rising sun (and, according to analogy the case will be the same at the setting sun) throws his rays over the *Broaken* upon the body of a man, standing opposite to fine light clouds floating around, or hovering past him, he need only fix his eyes stedfastly upon them, and in all probability he will see the singular spectacle of his own shadow, extending to the length of five or six hundred feet, at the distance of two miles before him. This is one of the most agreeable phænomenon I ever had an opportunity of remarking on the great observatory of Germany !"

DETACHED EXTRACTS.

Numberless are the excellent literary works that have been produced in sickness and in want, that would never otherwise have seen the light. Dr. Henry wrote his History of England when confined to his bed. Dr. Johnson, in indigent circumstances and oppressed by bodily and mental affliction, accomplished his Dictionary. Does any one think he would have done it better if he had been rich, and in a perfect state of health and happiness ? In our opinion he would not have done it at all. *Flowers of Literature.*

Familiarity breeds contempt, says the proverb. There is not a more bitter satire on man than the truth of that observation ; for to a virtuous mind, familiarity only breeds esteem.

The hyperbolical eulogy is a species of praise which certainly frustrates the end of the panegyrist. The instant an eulogy exceeds that tribute which is due, it appears ironical, and consequently bears the form of satire.

"I am very much afraid," says Paschal, alluding to what is called the natural love of children, "that this nature is nothing more than a *first custom*, as custom is a second nature."

People of merit lose nothing by being known. Daylight or dark, a diamond will sparkle.

Those who wish to please, seldom fail. Ill nature is its own tormentor, and mars our best endeavors ; while good nature lends a grace to all our actions.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

THE MUSQUETO.

One evening as I walk'd abroad,
To take the summer air,
A fell Musqueto stung my leg,
Which made me stamp and swear.

Beware, beware, (the Insect cry'd)
That evil heart of thine ;
That heart so full of scorn and pride,
Has stings more fell than mine.

Then, melanaholy as I mus'd,
Revolving various care,
He still kept buzzing round my head,
That man was made to bear.

PATIENCE.

SELECTED POETRY.

ODE, FROM THE AUTHOR TO HIS MISTRESS, AFTER REFUSAL.

BY JOHN EDMUND HARWOOD.

I turn'd so pale when first the news I heard,
  Pale as I could, my love, *with my complexion!*
Sunk were mine eyes, and blue my grisly beard,
  And bent my beetle brows, in sad reflection.

My carcase on the hard, hard ground I threw;
  Awhile the lamb-like softness of my soul
  Was lost amidst the angry tempest's howl;
Even you, my fair, whom I have lov'd so true,
  I called a little imp of evil,
  More false, more treacherous than the devil!
I dare say, now, you thought that I should die!
  'Tis pity maid so fair should be mistaken!
Alas! I fear you will but gain a sigh,
  A tear or two, some angry looks and curses,
  And, if the muse be kind, some spiteful verses;
But death!—No! no! my pride will save my bacon.

Not but I might, perchance, in sullen mood,
  This goodly throat with hempen-cord adorning,
Dangling from some tall poplar in the wood,
  Dance to the breeze on a November morning;
'Twould be so lover like, to seek my death
  On th' anniversary of that same hour,
  When, the pride of beauty's future power,
My infant mistress, first inhal'd her breath:
I might, perchanoe, seek Lethe in some stream,
  Dive to that bliss which I had lost above,
Become of village nurse the midnight theme,
  Or form the ballad of "Rejected Love."

Now, whether I'm fastidious, or in fear,
  I want the heart to quit this scene of trouble;
Hope gives a hint there still is something near,
  And like a child I wish to grasp the bubble.
She whispers too, I may have better luck yet;
So, if you please, I will not kick the bucket.

I know you wish the village boys to hoot,
  "Look! look! there goes a poor desponding poet!
"There goes the dangler on a petticoat!"
  All this you wish, you cruel jade, you know it!
But I shall baulk you, mistress, on my life!
  For, though tempestuous scorn now clouds me over,
Some future sun may shine, some fairer wife
  May tender consolation to your lover:
Mean time, while sweet Thalia is my muse,
  I'll make to this same death a stout resistance,
Brushing at early dawn the healthful dews,
  To keep his scare-crow worship at a distance.

SINCERITY.

Sincerity,
Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave
Thy onward path! altho' the earth should gape,
And from the gulph of hell destruction cry,
To take dissimulation's winding way.

ANECDOTES.

A negro boy observing his master asleep in the parlour, saw a Musquete buzzing round his cherry-red nose; he watched him narrowly, when at length he ventured to light on it, but immediately flew off—which tawny observing, exclaimed, "Me grad to see you burn your foot."

A jack tar, growing sick of his business, deserted his ship, went into the country, and hired himself to a farmer. He was immediately set to ploughing with a yoke of oxen and an old mare, called Jin. The sailor being totally unacquainted with the management of the tacks, sheets, and bowlines of the old mare and oxen, in his first attempt to heave about, missed stays, and by turning the yoke, threw Jin and the oxen all down in a heap together.—Jack, frightened with the confusion, bawled out for help. The farmer asked "what is the matter?" "Matter! matter enough, (replied Jack,) the larboard ox has got on the starboard side—old Jin has got foul in the rigging, and they are all going to destruction stern foremost."

MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

FIRE!—On Tuesday morning last, a building owned by Mr. Joseph Hathorne, and occupied by Capt. Joshua Cushing as a Printing-Office, Mr. Isaac Cushing as a Book-Bindery, and by Mess'rs Cushing & Appleton as a store-house, was destroyed by fire, with most of its contents, which were very valuable. The destruction of property is estimated at about $18,000—of which Mess'rs Cushing & Appleton are the greatest sufferers. Capt. J. Cushing's loss is very considerable, being several valuable founts of type, three presses, all his printing apparatus, and a considerable quantity of paper; besides a total derangement of his business. Mr. Isaac Cushing saved most of his tools, but most of his stock was destroyed. It is hoped that a generous public will not permit these industrious and enterprizing citizens to bear, unassisted, so severe a loss.

The first volume of American Annals, or a Chronological History of America, from its discovery in 1492 to 1806, by Abiel Holmes, D.D. A.A.S. S.K.S. is published by Wm. Hilliard, Cambridge. The 2d vol. is now in the press.

DARING ROBBERY!—Last Wednesday night, about 12 o'clock, as Daniel Runells, of Haverhill, was passing through Andover, a few rods from Chickering's tarvern, two men armed with a gun and bayonet, stoped his sleigh, and demanded his money. But he repeatedly refused to deliver it, when they attempted to stab him in the breast; but as he sprang from them his foot slipped, and the bayonet entered his left side, passed under his clothes and out the other side without doing him any material injury. His pocket-book containing $255, and several notes, was then delivered up, and they went off. One of them was about five feet ten inches high and rather corpulent, the other shorter, slender, and of a dark complexion, and both dressed in short dark colored coats or sailors' jackets.

COUNTERFEIT BILLS.—There are a great number of Couterfeit Bank Bills in circulation; a list and description of which, may be obtained at the office of the Visitant.

MORE COUNTERFEITS.—Yesterday, a man by the name of Jenks, was committed to gaol in Dedham, for having passed in Boston, on Thursday, between five and six hundred dollars counterfeit bank bills, of the *Farmer's Exchange Bank* of *Glocester, R. I.* of the denomination of two, five, and ten dollars.

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